

The Evening Times-Star

The Evening Times-Star is published at 22-27, Centre street, every evening (Sunday excepted) by the Publishing Co., 22-27, Centre street, St. John, N. B. Telephone 101-102. Private branch connecting all departments. Main office: 22-27, Centre street. By mail per year, in Canada, \$2.00; United States, \$3.00; by carrier per year, \$2.00. The Evening Times-Star has the largest circulation of any evening paper in the Maritime Provinces. Advertising Representatives: New York, Frank R. McHugh, 220 Madison Ave., Chicago, E. E. Howard, 19 South La Salle Street. The Audit Bureau of Circulations audits the circulation of The Evening Times-Star.

ST. JOHN, N. B., OCTOBER 14, 1924

THE VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL.

When the people of St. John were asked to vote for or against the building of a vocational high school, a majority favored construction. Nothing has happened since that day which reverses the people's decision. Money was just as scarce then as it is now and prospects were by no means so good. It is true that the vote was small and the majority far from great but it is true also that thousands of citizens did not vote for or against the Mayor and Commissioners, or for or against prohibition.

It is said by some that the school trustees are not elected, and therefore do not represent the popular will in this school matter. But the fact is that in this case the people themselves gave a direct mandate; they were asked to say whether or not they wanted the school, and they replied that they did. That is the record. If this plebiscite is to be disregarded, it is time to go out of the plebiscite business.

There is, so far as we know, no guarantee that the Government will now available would be available three years hence. The delegates who went to Fredericton to secure an extension of time sufficient to avoid any risk of losing the Government's contribution, and who secured that extension, came back with the well-settled idea that any further fiddling would mean the death of the project.

The cost of building, and of maintenance, it is true, will add to the tax rate. The citizens who voted, and those who neglected to vote, knew that quite well. But a majority of the jury to whom the matter was submitted said they wanted the school, and for their representatives that verdict is still valid. Otherwise, why ask the people? They were not asked to decide conditionally. They were asked to settle it.

MONEY AND MOTOR CARS.

There are registered in Canada today eight motor vehicles for every one that was registered in 1915, according to a writer in the Ottawa Citizen, and he asks how much more money the people of Canada had in 1924 than they had eight years before.

His question develops interest quickly when some of the facts are presented. In 1924 Canadians spent \$92,000,000 on motor cars, according to the figures of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics—on motor vehicles and parts. In that year there were 885,079 registered motorists. What did the average one spend on "license tax, gas, oil, garage buildings, repairs, chauffeur's wages, and hotel bills?" The Citizen suggests that \$200 would be a low estimate. Many will think it too low by half, and more that it is at least too moderate. But if \$200 be accepted for the purposes of argument, these expenditures, plus the \$22,000,000 make a total of \$220,015,800. The Citizen may well ask, "Where did we get all this money in a year when everyone was growling about hard times?" The figures, it says, "are the more amazing when it is remembered that this tremendous expenditure is a comparatively new thing." The Citizen, which is an ardent supporter of the Ontario Temperance Act and which is urging people to vote to retain it, suggests that while there may not be much more money going than there was in 1915, a large portion of the money now spent on motor cars and motoring may formerly have been used to buy whiskey and beer. The theory is interesting, but even if there is something in it, it does not explain where all that money comes from. We may leave the merits or demerits of the O. T. A. to the Citizens and the people of Ontario at the moment, merely pointing out that many motorists—a very great number—are dry or temperate, and that those motorists who drank before prohibition and still drink, pay today for the same quantity of whiskey or beer several times what they did in the old days.

It is more likely that Canadians spend \$800,000,000 than \$220,000,000 a year now on motors and motoring, and whatever increase there has been in their wealth since 1915 there has been no increase to keep pace with the wonderful increase in the number of cars. The net advance in the cost of living since 1915 is another factor which makes the question still more puzzling. Whether Ontario votes dry or wet the influence of the example will be considerable in the other provinces so far as liquor legislation is concerned; but so far as the purchase of motor cars goes, and the expenses incidental to motoring, there will be no halt, wet or dry. We live in a motoring age; in Canada the increase in cars will continue to be amazing. The country that bought and operated so many motor vehicles in the last three years, while "growling about hard times," will buy a great many more as business conditions improve, and the average car will be a more expensive one. The number of people who can afford cars is not going to diminish, and there is no reason for

Press Comment

ADVENTURES IN GLOOM.

(New York Herald-Tribune.) The editor of "The London Athenaeum," Mr. J. Middleton Murry, has written a book about Dostoevsky calculated to make the editor of almost any of our popular magazines throw back his head and bark like a coyote. Mr. Murry not only dares to be "gloomy" (synonymous in the vocabulary of the aforesaid editor for "serious" or "highbrow"), but for something like 250 pages of well-written English he enlarges on the conviction that the only conclusion to be reached from any thoroughgoing attempt to solve life's riddle is one of despair.

We do not share Mr. Murry's views, and possibly for that very reason, let alone the fact that they differ so utterly from some of the Pollyannaish folder served in the usual magazine d'hoth, we desire from their personal vantage point on "The London Athenaeum" an exclusive diet of cream puffs or a welcome dash of hardback and bitter.

Dostoevsky and Mr. Murry, too, it seems, is obsessed by a sort of nightmare notion of life's "futility." Just what this means is not easy to explain in a word, but apparently it may mean anything from the realization, which everybody has now and then, of his own littleness in the face of human life as a whole to the metaphysical obscurity, as Mr. Murry cheerfully puts it, of the "frozen waste of eternity." The more of the reason for this obsession of futility is Dostoevsky's feeling that everyday life had no reality, and that the results of pushing beyond life's surface to the ultimate meaning of existence was to arrive at a conviction of despair.

He despairs, for one thing, because the existence of undeserved pain and suffering seemed to him to prove that there was no omnipotent, beneficent Force above and beyond the individual. He despairs, for another thing, because he reasoned, there is no force greater than I, then I am my own God. To think myself my own God, I will completely, must conquer all things, even my own weak earthly instincts, which are in that Will in the end, I kill myself in order to conquer my fear of death. I destroy my life in order to show that I have the Will completely live!

"Bughouse!" the average man will say. As we remarked before, we do not share Mr. Murry's ideas. Yet miles of dusty library shelves are filled with learned tomes expressing such philosophy. The more one disposes of such notions the more necessary it is to face and dispose of them. It is like a suspicious note of his hand. "Please, sir, I did," he says. "Why, she takes off my boots for me in the evening."

"Ah! When you come home from the club?" suggested the other.

"No—when I want to go there."—Edinburgh Scotsman.

THE OLD "TIGER."

Old man Clemenceau, the "Tiger" of France, known, too, as "the father of victory," spent most of his eighty-third birthday in working on a book of philosophy which is to be published after his death, and in tending his little vegetable garden, giving an hour or so to the reading of messages of congratulation from many men of note the world over. A fresh vista might yet bring this wonderful old man from the retreat he has selected for his closing years, among the scenes of his boyhood, but his own view is that he has retired definitely from public affairs, Clemenceau-like, and will hereafter occupy himself only with work of his own choosing.

In a little one-story house with a cabbage garden before it he lives for most of the year, shut out from the world in those days of storm he played so great a part. His book on philosophy is one requiring great labor, for only the rough draft of the first of three volumes is complete and he expects to spend two more years in perfecting that, and ten in finishing the two other volumes, after which, he says laughingly, he will rest and grow old. As he is hale and hearty at eighty-three he may be justified in looking so far ahead. As to the nature of the book he is silent, contenting himself with saying that it will reveal his views of men and of life and will constitute his literary legacy to posterity. The world will hope that he may have time to finish it. The fierce power of his personality and the striking character of his war activities will give the book a vast circle of readers.

The "Tiger" of France is not a lawyer, as many have supposed, but a physician. His father, his grandfather and his great-grandfather were doctors. Indeed for 800 years back the head of the family was a doctor. This long and strong family tradition is broken for the first time by Clemenceau's son, Michel, who became an engineer.

Wonderful as it may seem, one of the most striking of the world's living figures, Georges Clemenceau gives one more example of both resolution and versatility in leaving the "tamtam and the shouting" in which he bore so brave a part, to devote to philosophy and a message to mankind the serene years, as they few or many, to which he has won after a long life of stress and of storm. Surely, France and the world will say of him that he did the State some service. Life for him ever spelled conflict, and ever, too, he was captain of his soul. Courage and imagination, a contempt for rules and for commonplace procedure, and, above all, a robust and daring patriotism—of these we must think when we contemplate Clemenceau the Philosopher.

"MILKPAI STUFF."

(Toronto Globe.) The women politicians in the United States are in the midst of a violent controversy. There is no saying where it may end. The more they talk into it, too. Apparently the fact that Mrs. Coolidge could bake biscuits was seized upon by the Republican party, for it is knowledge that should be given every woman voter. The idea was to convince female electors that the President's wife was "just plain folk."

It was also thought worthy of broad-casting that Mrs. Coolidge made a shirtwaist for \$1.00. The Republican publicity experts characterizing that accomplishment as "great stuff." Pictures of Mrs. Coolidge baking biscuits were sent out.

One of the Republican women leaders explained that the wife of a President must undergo publicity about her home life. It was added that Mrs. Coolidge did not like this, but she realized it was necessary in her position as mistress of the White House. But here enters Miss Elizabeth Marbury as quite a determined lady who prides herself on being able to distinguish at a glance the essentials from the non-essentials. Perhaps she likes to deal with the tariff and such ponderous themes. In any event, when the publicity concerning Mrs. Coolidge's biscuits and the \$1.00 shirtwaist was drawn to the attention of Miss Elizabeth Marbury she dismissed the subject with the expression, "Milk-pai stuff." Thereupon the Republican women became more determined and "ad themselves interviewed to the effect that Mrs. Coolidge could bake and could sew, and "very likely could milk a cow." But the gist of Miss Marbury about "milk-pai stuff" seems to have permeated the best circles, and even the Kansas farmers are said to be laughing. The annoyance of the Republican women is increasing.

One's sympathy goes in to Mrs. Coolidge. But we gather that Miss Elizabeth Marbury is a Democrat.

PLAN ARMISTICE FESTIVAL.

The holding of an Armistice Festival on Nov. 18 for all of the teenage girls in the city was decided upon at a meeting of the local Girl Work Board last night in St. Andrew's church with Miss Florence Cummings, president, in the chair. A programme committee and a promotion committee were appointed in connection with the festival. It was hoped all the teenage girls in the Sunday schools and their teachers would attend the festival. Other plans for the new season's activities were discussed and Miss Marjorie Trotter, Maritime girls' work secretary, gave helpful advice.

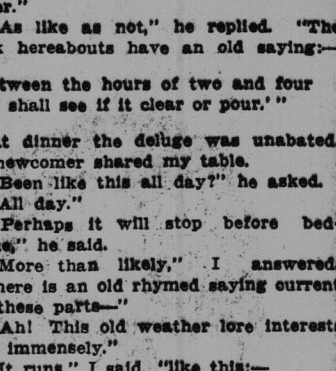
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MONCTON BOY KILLED.

James Wellwood, eight years of age, son of Mrs. Fred Wellwood of Moncton, was killed yesterday afternoon, when he was knocked down and run over by one of the buses operating in that city. Henry Cormier, who was driving the bus, said the boy Wellwood jumped from behind a team in front of the bus and it was impossible to stop.

In 18 years 1985 forest fires in America raged 1,120,000 acres of timber.

QUICK WIT.

A schoolmaster picked up a penny in the playground. Later, when all the children had assembled, he asked: "Has any boy lost a penny?"

"Yes," said a boy, "I lost a penny."

"After a short pause a small boy held up his hand. "Please, sir, I did," he said. "Why, she takes off my boots for me in the evening."

"Ah! When you come home from the club?" suggested the other.

"No—when I want to go there."—Edinburgh Scotsman.

TOO REALISTIC.

"Did you enjoy the amateur dramatics show last night?"

"Well, I thought it was too realistic."

"Really?"

"Yes, I said on the programme: 'One hour is supposed to elapse between the first and second acts,' and it actually did!"—Windsor Telegram.

SOME AID.

"Mordcaid Judson," roared Col. White, who was aroused in the middle of the night by a suspicious noise in his house, "is that you in there, you black thief?"

"No, sah," humbly replied a frightened voice. "Dis am mah cousin Ink Judson dat looks so much like me an' steals everything he kin lay his hands on. Ah'm at home dis minute, sah, sleepin' de sleep o' de ju."—Boston Transcript.

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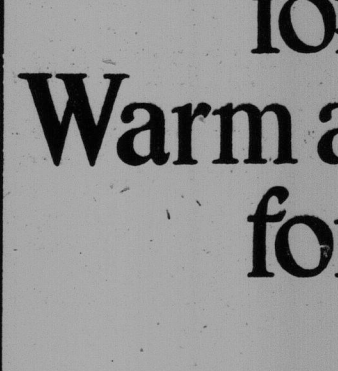
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CONSIDER NEED OF HALL.

The need of a hall was again considered at the meeting of the East St. John Community Club last night. The meeting was held in Edith avenue hall with C. Weldon, president, in the chair and a good attendance of members. A committee consisting of Rupert Taylor and E. F. Banks was appointed to approach the owners and trustee board in charge of the hall formerly used, which hall is being removed to the site purchased by the Methodist and Presbyterian denominations to be used as a church hall. It was hoped that the use of this building might be again secured as a meeting place for the club.

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